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SUBJECT: NATO-UKRAINE AMBASSADORIAL MARCH 5: PREPARING FOR
THE NUC SUMMIT

REF: A. NUC(PC)N(2008)0001-REV1
[1](#)B. NUC(PC)N(2007)0006-REV3
[1](#)C. KYIV 462

Classified By: Ambassador Victoria Nuland for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Ukrainian Ambassador Sagach discussed the broad outlines of next month's NATO-Ukraine Summit with PermReps on March 5. He reaffirmed Ukraine's request for an invitation to MAP and pressed for a Joint Statement at the Summit; both issues are controversial within the Alliance. He signaled Ukraine's intention to step up its contributions to NATO-led operations in 2008 and to the NRF in 2010. He acknowledged "political tensions and turbulence" in domestic politics, but insisted that the government was committed to eventual membership in the Alliance. Ambassador Nuland reaffirmed U.S. support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, saying the question about MAP for Ukraine was not "whether," but "when." Poland, Lithuania, Canada, Romania, and Estonia called for a positive decision on MAP at Bucharest. Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium questioned the level of Ukrainian political and public support for NATO. France called for "a positive message of cooperation" at the Summit.
End Summary.

UKRAINE: STILL WANT MAP

[1](#)2. (C) Ukrainian Ambassador to NATO Sagach met with PermReps March 5 to lay the groundwork for the April 4 NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) Summit meeting in Bucharest. The main questions for Bucharest are how to respond to the letter from Ukrainian President Yushchenko, Rada Speaker Yatsenyuk, and PM Tymoshenko to NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer requesting an invitation to launch a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) and whether to strive for a Joint Statement at the Summit. Sagach reaffirmed Ukraine's request for both MAP and a Joint Statement. Although Allies have not reached agreement on those questions, a number of PermReps stated their national positions, breaking with the usual practice of remaining silent on issues lacking consensus.

[1](#)3. (C) Sagach said that, after MAP, his government's foreign policy priorities were continuing defense and security sector reform, completing democratic control over all sectors of government, and pressing forward a public information campaign on NATO. He called for increasing the tempo of NUC Ambassadorials and Intensified Dialogue sessions and invited the SecGen and the NAC to visit Ukraine again. Sagach signaled Ukraine's intention to step up its ISAF contribution

in Afghanistan, as well as reaffirming Kyiv's offer to contribute forces to the NATO Reaction Force (NRF). Turning to domestic issues, he cited energy security, investment promotion, fighting corruption, and (again) defense and security sector reform as priorities. He acknowledged that "political tensions and turbulence" existed, explaining that domestic political arguments over NATO were a pretext for contesting "the issue of power."

MANY VOICES OF SUPPORT

14. (C) Ambassador Nuland reaffirmed strong U.S. support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, saying that Allies were carefully considering a MAP invitation and the question was not "whether," but "when." MAP, she reminded PermReps, was a process, not an invitation to immediate membership. She urged quick approval of the 2008 Annual Target Plan (ATP) REF A) for delivery to Heads of State and Government at Bucharest. Finally, she asked for a prognosis of the public information campaign on NATO and asked how Ukraine planned to manage the tightening of its energy supplies by its "big neighbor."

15. (C) Seventeen other Allied reps took the floor. Poland, Lithuania, Canada, Romania, and Estonia explicitly endorsed a positive decision on MAP at Bucharest. Turkey, Slovakia, and Slovenia signaled their support slightly more ambiguously. Several of them also went on record supporting a Joint Statement for the Summit, to which Germany responded with words of caution. The Netherlands and Belgium questioned the level of Ukrainian political and public support for NATO, emphasizing the need for a "stable and lasting consensus" on an issue as critical as undertaking MAP. France sounded more supportive, calling for "a positive message of cooperation"

at the Summit.

16. (C) Sagach responded that Ukraine's Governmental Program, endorsed by all parties in the coalition, contained concrete taskings to work toward eventual Alliance membership. Turning to the U.S., he reported that one million dollars had been allocated to the public information campaign, which was coordinated by the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting and involved no fewer than 50 Ministries and Agencies. The Foreign Ministry, he continued, was promoting its own public outreach effort focusing on regional news outlets and broadcasters. He said the energy dispute with Russia was strictly a commercial issue and would be addressed in bilateral negotiations.

NOTATION OF THE ATP

17. (U) The NUC Ambassadors noted the 2007 ATP Assessment (REF B) before concluding business.

COMMENT

18. (C) For a first-time performance, Ambassador Sagach did a good job, tiptoeing through a minefield of domestic Ukrainian and inter-Allied divisions. He pre-empted some awkward questions about internal divisions by acknowledging that those were part of the natural "vibrancy" of a democracy. The elephant in the room, however, was why he -- and not PM Tymoshenko -- was in the chair. Tymoshenko was scheduled to be in Brussels later the same day, but chose not to attend the NUC. Her apparent snub of NATO -- the second since the beginning of the year -- reinforced the tendency of some Allies to question the breadth of high-level Ukrainian commitment to pursuing MAP by Bucharest.

NULAND